

What is claimed:

1. A method for cleaning a first group of electrodes contained within an air conditioner, wherein a second group of electrodes within the air conditioner has a cleaning device fastened with the second group of electrodes, which also engage the first group of electrodes, the method comprising, in any order:

- (a) removing the second group of electrodes from the air conditioner; and
- (b) replacing the second group of electrodes back into the air conditioner.

2. A method as recited in Claim 2, wherein removing the second group of electrodes from the air conditioner in step (a) causes the cleaning device to travel along the first group of electrodes and frictionally remove contaminants from the outer surface of the first group of electrodes.

3. A method as recited in Claim 2, wherein replacing the second group of electrodes back into air conditioner in step (b) deflects the cleaning device away from the first group of electrodes such that the cleaning device does not contact the first group of electrodes when the second group of electrodes are completely placed back into the air conditioner.

4. A method for cleaning a first electrode contained within an air conditioner, wherein a second electrode within the air conditioner has a cleaning device fastened with the second electrode, which also engage the first electrode, the method comprising, in any order:

- (a) removing the second electrode from the air conditioner; and
- (b) replacing the second electrode back into the air conditioner.

5. A method as recited in Claim 4, wherein removing the second electrode from the air conditioner in step (a) causes the cleaning device to travel along the first electrode and frictionally remove contaminants from the outer surface of the first electrode.

6. A method as recited in Claim 4, wherein replacing the second electrode back into the air conditioner in step (b) deflects the cleaning device away from the first electrode such that the cleaning device does not contact the first electrode when the second electrode is completely placed back into the air conditioner.

7. A method for cleaning a wire-like electrode in an air conditioner of the type having a housing in which are disposed a first electrode, a second electrode, and a source of high voltage that provides a voltage potential difference between the first electrode and the second electrode, the second electrode removably disposed in the housing and having a base member, the method including:

disposing within the housing a mechanism to frictionally clean the first electrode when the base member of the second electrode is moved;

moving the base member of the second electrode by removing the second electrode from the housing, thereby causing the mechanism to clean the first electrode.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein disposing the mechanism includes attaching a first end of a strip of flexible high voltage tolerant material to the base, a second end of the strip defining a slit sized to frictionally engage the first electrode, the strip extending toward and beyond the first electrode;

wherein the strip is disposed such that when the second electrode is inserted in the housing the first electrode fits within the slit;

wherein movement of the strip frictionally cleans an outer surface of the first electrode.

9. The method of claim 8, further including:

urging the second end of strip upward and away from the first electrode when the second electrode is fully inserted in the housing.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein the urging includes disposing a vane projecting from an interior region of the housing such that a distal end of the vane contacts the strip and urges the second end upward and away from the first electrode.

11. The method of claim 9, wherein the disposing the mechanism includes pivotally and biasedly attaching a first end of an arm to the base, and attaching to a second end of the arm a strip of flexible high voltage tolerant material whose distal end defines a slit sized to frictionally engage the first electrode, the strip extending toward and beyond the first electrode;

wherein the strip is disposed such that when the second electrode is inserted in the housing the first electrode fits within the slit;

wherein movement of the strip frictionally cleans an outer surface of the first electrode.

12. A method for cleaning a first electrode contained within an air conditioner, wherein a second electrode within the air conditioner has a cleaning device associated with the second electrode, which also engage the first electrode, the method comprising, in any order, the steps of:

- (a) removing the second electrode from the air conditioner; and
- (b) replacing the second electrode back into the air conditioner.

13. A method as recited in Claim 12, wherein removing the second electrode from the air conditioner in step (a) causes the cleaning device to travel along the first electrode and frictionally remove contaminants from the outer surface of the first electrode.

14. A method as recited in Claim 12, wherein replacing the second electrode back into the air conditioner in step (b) deflects the cleaning device away from the first electrode such that the cleaning device does not contact the first electrode when the second electrode is completely placed back into the air conditioner.